

REMARKS

Applicants thank the Examiner for his attention to the application.

The application was filed with 16 claims. Claims 8, 11 and 15 have been amended, claims 9, 10, 12, and 13 have been cancelled, and claims 17 to 31 have been added. No new subject matter was added by way of this amendment. Claims 1 to 31 are supported in the specification as originally filed.

Examiner's Objections under 35 USC 102(b)

The Examiner has rejected claims 1 to 16 under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Stucka et al., US Patent #5,596,702, hereinafter Stucka. The Examiner details his rejections for each claim. Applicants respectfully submit that the patent application is not anticipated by Stucka for the reasons set out below. Applicants provide comments below in response to the Examiner's comments.

Applicants note that the Examiner has interpreted the word "component" in claims 1 to 16 to mean "user interface component" as defined in Stucka in column 6, lines 45 to 58. Applicants respectfully submit that such an interpretation is incorrect and leads to an incorrect finding of anticipation by Stucka.

Applicants note that the word "component" is defined in the present application as meaning tools that can be added to an application (page 2, lines 12 to 14). Each component or tool comprises a set of user interface elements. User interface elements include items, toolbars, menus, dockers and shortcut keys (page 2, lines 21 to 22). User interface elements may also include drop down lists, edit controls, sliders, shortcut keys, shortcut key tables, etc. (page 7, lines 26 to 29). Applicants respectfully submit that Stucka defines components to mean user

interface elements and not tools. Applicants note that claims 1 and 5 of the present application recite the merger of software application user interface elements and a component user interface element “of a component”. Stucka merely discusses how user interface elements of a particular application may be merged. Stucka does not discuss the merging of application user interface elements with component user interface elements.

Applicants also note that the Examiner has interpreted the use of a callback function in Stucka as an association of a particular functionality with a user interface component. In addition to the fact that Stucka uses a different meaning for the term “component”, the use of a callback function is not an association of a component (or tool) user interface element with a component (or tool). A callback is merely associated with a particular user action in an element of a user interface. Stucka teaches the use of a callback function to respond to a user action. In contrast, the claims in the present application refer to an association of a user interface element with a component (or tool).

Applicants request reconsideration of the Examiner’s comments with respect to the claims:

With regard to claims 1 and 5, applying the comments above with respect to the meanings of the terms “component” and “association”, Applicants respectfully submit that Stucka does not anticipate claims 1 and 5.

With regard to claim 8, Applicants have amended the claim to be dependent upon claim 5. With regard to claim 11, Applicants have amended the claim to be dependent upon claim 8. Given the comments above with respect to the definition of the term “component”, Applicants respectfully submit that Stucka does not anticipate claims 8 and 11.

With regards to claims 2, 6, 9, and 12, Applicants submit that claim 2 is dependent upon claim 1, and claim 6 is dependant upon claim 5. Moreover, the same comments with respect to the definition of the term “component” applies to these claims. Applicants respectfully submit that Stucka does not anticipate claims 2 and 6. Applicants have cancelled claims 9 and 12.

With regards to claims 3, 7, 10, and 13, Applicants submit that claim 3 is dependent upon claim 1, and claim 7 is dependant upon claim 5. Moreover, the same comments with respect to the definition of the term “component” applies to these claims. Applicants respectfully submit that Stucka does not anticipate claims 3 and 7. Applicants have cancelled claims 10 and 13.

With regard to claim 4, Applicants submit that since it is dependent upon claim 1. Moreover, the same comments with respect to the definition of the term “component” applies to this claim. Applicants respectfully submit that Stucka does not anticipate claim 4.

With regards to claims 14 and 15, applying the comments above with respect to the meanings of the term “component” and “association”, Applicants respectfully submit that Stucka does not anticipate claims 14 and 15.

With regard to claim 16, applying the comments above with respect to the meanings of the term “component” and “association”, Applicants respectfully submit that Stucka does not anticipate claim 16.

Applicants trust that the Examiner now agrees that claims 1 to 8, 11, and 14 to 16 are not anticipated by Stucka. Moreover, since Stucka uses different definitions for the terms “component” and “association”, Stucka actually teaches away from the claims. Therefore, claims 1 to 8, 11, and 14 to 16 are not obvious in view of Stucka.

Further Features that Distinguish the Application from Stucka

Applicants have added claims 17 to 31 to clarify the following features:

Claims 18, 20, 22, 26, 30 and 31 recite a solution for customizable user interfaces across components. This provides that a user can rearrange the user interface widgets and change their appearance without worrying about whether the widget came from the application or the component. When the component is removed, all the user interface elements added by the component is transparently removed as well.

Stucka does not take into account user customization scenarios for tools (or components).

Claims 17, 24, 30 and 31 recite a way to allow user interfaces or workspaces to be shared between users, including component interfaces. Moreover, a component may be customized by one user, and such customization used by another user sharing the interface. Thus, an interface may not be registered to a user's machine, but is nonetheless shared by that user.

Stucka does not consider scenarios when the component to which a given user interface belongs is not registered on the user's machine. Stucka only teaches that an application may have a user interface which can be downloaded onto the machines of separate users, who may then tailor their own user interface. Thus, the concept of sharing in Stucka merely involves multiple users accessing the same default application user interface.

Claims 21, 23, 30, and 31 recite the ability for components to integrate into the application's user interface while the application is running. This ability is not taught in Stucka.

Claims 19, 25, and 27 to 31 recite support for the scenario when the user interface is shared between users and a component is not available in the user's machine. This is not taught in Stucka.

Claims 17 to 22 are dependant upon claim 1, and claims 24 to 29 are dependant upon claim 5. As such, Applicants submit that claims 17 to 29 are not anticipated by Stucka. With regard to new claims 30 and 31, Applicants recite the term "tool" in place of "component" for extra clarity. Given the comments above with respect to the definition of the term "component" and the features that Stucka does not teach, Applicants respectfully submit that Stucka does not anticipate new claims 30 and 31. Moreover, claims 17 to 31 are not obvious in view of Stucka.

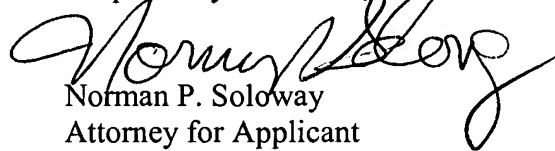
Closing

Having dealt with all the objections raised by the Examiner, the Application is believed to be in order for allowance. Early and favorable action are respectfully requested.

A credit card payment Form PTO-2038 authorizing a charge in the amount of \$236.00 to cover the seven added dependent claims and fees for the Petition for One-Month Extension of Time is enclosed.

In the event there are any fee deficiencies or additional fees are payable, please charge them (or credit any overpayment) to our Deposit Account Number 08-1391.

Respectfully submitted,



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Serial No. 10/039,486
Docket No. GSH 08-892801
Amendment A

CERTIFICATE OF MAILING

I hereby certify that this correspondence is being deposited with the United States Postal Service as First Class Mail in an envelope addressed to: MAIL STOP AMENDMENTS, Commissioner for Patents, P.O. Box 1450, Alexandria, VA 22313-1450 on October 29, 2004, at Tucson, Arizona.

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